

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following list of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended) A business method for the direct supply for containerized liquid coating product inclusive of a plurality of particular, custom, colors to an ultimate consumer of the liquid coating product by a supplier remote from a the ultimate consumer thereby enabling bypassing of local retailers, said business method comprising the steps of:

accepting, over a computer network from at least one ultimate consumer, of a customer order placed directly with a remote supplier specifying customer order information including indication of a liquid coating base, a color, a quantity, delivery address and identification of the ultimate consumer ~~customer~~;

entering said customer order information into a customer order subsystem comprised of software maintained on a computer;

compiling said customer order information with a computer and processing the results of this compilation with a production subsystem to yield production parameters;

operating, in observance of said production parameters yielded by said production subsystem, a containerized liquid coating production line capable of producing in a single batch a customer specified quantity that is not an even multiple of gallons, quarts and pints in any one of a plurality of particular, custom, colors ~~containerized liquid coatings~~ with a precision in the addition of colorant to liquid coating base exceeding the precision readily obtainable by a conventional local retailer;

assembling containerized liquid coating product resulting from said production line fulfilling at least one individual customer order and packaging the resulting assemblage as required for shipment;

causing the transporting of each said assemblage of containerized liquid coating product fulfilling each said customer order to the delivery address specified by the ultimate consumer in placing the customer order;

whereby each said ultimate consumer obtains delivery of a customer specified quantity and color of containerized liquid coating product directly to a specified address in accordance with said customer order information ~~which may be inclusive of particular, custom, colors.~~

2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said containerized liquid coating product is containerized in rigid metal paint cans.

3. (currently amended) The method of claim 2 wherein fulfillment of said customer order includes fractional ~~partial~~ filling of one of said rigid metal paint cans to less than full capacity.

4. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said containerized liquid coating product is containerized in molded plastic expandable containers.

5. (cancelled).

6. (previously presented) The method of claim 4 wherein said molded plastic expandable containers possess a collar about an aperture which collar is gripped during operation of said production line.

7. (original) The method of claim 1 further including the step of identifying customer order information upon containers holding containerized liquid coating product.

8. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the step of identifying customer order information upon said containers is effected with the attachment of a label to each said container bearing a digital code readable by a scanner.

9. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the step of identifying customer order information upon said containers is effected with the attachment of a label to each said container bearing printed customer order information.

10. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein said customer order information is comprised of at least one of the group comprised of: color name of liquid coating product, customer name, delivery date, quantity of product in order, number of containers for each liquid coating product in the order.

11. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the operation of said production line includes the addition of blended liquid coating base to an empty container.

12. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein said blended liquid coating base is obtained from a manufacturer in large containers ranging in volume from fifty-five gallon barrels through railroad tank cars inclusive of 1,000 liter totes.

13. (original) The method of claim 12 wherein a pipeline is utilized for the transfer of liquid coating base from said large containers to a tank from which said liquid coating base is dispensed.

14. (original) The method of claim 11 further including the step of identifying the type of liquid coating base added upon the container.

15. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein the operation of said production line includes the addition of colorant to the blended liquid coating base.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 15 further including the step of identifying the name of the color resulting from the colorant added upon the container.

17. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of accepting an order placed by an ultimate consumer directly with a supplier of liquid coating product is conducted with use of telecommunications.

18. (currently amended) The method of claim 17 wherein the step of accepting an order placed by an ultimate consumer directly with a supplier of liquid coating product is conducted with use of a telephone connected to a public telephone exchange.

19. (original) The method of claim 17 wherein the step of entering said customer order into a customer order subsystem is accomplished by supplier personnel.

20. (currently amended) The method of claim 17 wherein the step of accepting an order placed by an ultimate consumer directly with a supplier of liquid coating product is conducted with use of facsimile transmission through a telephone exchange.

21. (original) The method of claim 17 wherein the customer order subsystem and the production subsystem are both maintained on the same computer.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the customer order subsystem is maintained on one computer and the production subsystem is maintained on a different computer.

23. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of accepting an order placed by an ultimate consumer directly with a remote supplier of liquid coating product is conducted with use of the internet.

24. (currently amended) The method of claim 23 wherein an internet device is utilized by the ultimate consumer to place an order directly with a remote supplier of liquid coating product.

25. (currently amended) The method of claim 24 wherein the step of placing an order by an ultimate consumer directly with a supplier of liquid coating product is conducted with use by the ultimate consumer of a dedicated terminal with internet access only to a web site maintained by the supplier.

26. (original) The method of claim 25 wherein the step of entering said customer order into a customer order subsystem is accomplished by the computer maintaining the customer order subsystem.

27. (original) The method of claim 23 wherein the customer order subsystem and the production subsystem are both maintained on the same computer.

28. (previously presented) The method of claim 23 wherein the customer order subsystem is maintained on one computer and the production subsystem is maintained on a different computer.

29. (previously presented) The method of claim 23 wherein a web site provides product information assisting in the selection of liquid coating product inclusive of the identification of a plurality of particular, custom colors.

30. (original) The method of claim 29 wherein said product information assisting in the selection of liquid coating product includes liquid base characteristics.

31. (currently amended) The method of claim 23 wherein a web site provides assistance in the selection of liquid coating product appropriate to a given job as defined by information input by the ultimate consumer.

32. (original) The method of claim 31 wherein said assistance in the selection of liquid coating product includes the recommendation of liquid coating base.

33. (currently amended) The method of claim 31 wherein said assistance in the selection of liquid coating product includes the calculation of appropriate volume for a given application as defined by ~~consumer~~ information input by the ultimate consumer.

34. (currently amended) The method of claim 31 wherein said assistance in the selection of liquid coating product includes the suggestion of at least one particular, custom, color based upon digital input by said ultimate consumer, said digital input including but not limited to digital video input, digital photograph input and digital solid modeling input.

35. (currently amended) A system enabling production of customized containerized liquid coatings, the system comprising:

an electronic interface, coupled to a computer network, for allowing an ultimate consumer ~~a customer~~ to place a customer order with a manufacturer specifying customer order information including indication of a particular volume and a custom color for a liquid coating;

a customer order subsystem for receiving said customer order information over said computer network;

a production subsystem for compiling said customer order information and processing the results of the compilation to yield production parameters; and

a production line of said manufacturer capable of producing variable quantities of containerized liquid coatings in a plurality of custom colors, the production line operable in accordance with said production parameters yielded by said production subsystem to produce in a single batch a customer specified volume that is not an even multiple of gallons, quarts and pints ~~the particular volume~~ and custom color of containerized liquid coating in accordance with said customer order information.

36. (previously presented) The system of claim 35 wherein the customer order subsystem receives said customer order information over the Internet.

37. (currently amended) The system of claim 36 wherein the interface includes a web site that provides assistance in the selection of liquid coating product appropriate to a given job as defined by information input by the ultimate consumer ~~customer~~ through the interface.

38. (currently amended) A system enabling production of customized containerized liquid coatings in accordance with customer orders received electronically over the Internet, the system comprising:

an Internet web site allowing an ultimate consumer ~~a customer~~ to input a customer order with a manufacturer specifying customer order information including indication of a particular volume and a custom color for a liquid coating, the Internet web site capable of providing customer assistance in the selection of a liquid coating appropriate to a given job as defined by the customer order information including identification of a custom color, recommendation of a liquid coating base, and calculation of an appropriate volume for the given job;

a customer order subsystem for receiving over the Internet said customer order information;

a production subsystem for compiling said customer order information and processing the results of the compilation to yield production parameters; and

a production line of said manufacturer capable of adding blended liquid coating bases and colorants to containers of various sizes to produce containerized liquid coatings in a plurality of custom colors and volumes including volumes that are not an even multiple of gallons, quarts and pints ~~and custom colors~~, the production line operable in accordance with said production parameters yielded by said production subsystem to produce in a single batch a customer specified volume that is not an even multiple of gallons, quarts and pints ~~the particular volume~~ and custom color of containerized liquid coating in accordance with said customer order information.

39. (currently amended) The system of claim 38 wherein said assistance in the selection of liquid coating includes suggestion of at least one custom color based upon

digital input by the ultimate consumer ~~customer~~ including at least one of digital video input, digital photograph input, and digital solid modeling input.

40. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein fulfilling customer orders includes only fractionally filling a container to less than full capacity with liquid coating product.

41. (new) The method of claim 40 further comprising pricing said fractionally filled container in accordance with the fractional quantity of liquid coating product within said fractionally filled container.

42. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein fulfilling customer orders includes containerizing liquid coating product in a container having a capacity that is not an even multiple of gallons, quarts and pints.

43. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein fulfilling customer orders includes providing an ultimate consumer with a quantity of liquid coating product that is not an even multiple of gallons, quarts and pints.

44. (new) A method enabling customized solutions for individual orders for containerized liquid coatings, the method comprising:

electronically receiving an order for a liquid coating over a computer network, the order including a plurality of inputs relating to a quantity and color of liquid coating and a delivery address;

controllably manufacturing in a single batch and containerizing a customer specified color and quantity of liquid coating in accordance with said inputs; and

causing delivery of the customer specified quantity and color of containerized liquid coating to the delivery address in accordance with said inputs.

45. (new) The method of claim 44 wherein containerizing includes only fractionally filling a container to less than full capacity with liquid coating.

46. (new) The method of claim 45 further comprising pricing said fractionally filled container in accordance with the fractional quantity within said fractionally filled container.

47. (new) The method of claim 44 wherein containerizing includes containerizing liquid coating in a container having a capacity that is not an even multiple of gallons, quarts and pints.

48. (new) The method of claim 44 wherein the method includes controllably manufacturing and containerizing liquid coating product in customer specified quantities that are even multiple of gallons, quarts and pints.

49. (new) The method of claim 44 wherein the method includes simultaneously manufacturing the customer specified quantity of liquid coating in a single batch to enable the customer specified quantity of liquid coating to have a more uniform color consistency than an equivalent quantity produced in two or more separate batches.

50. (new) The method of claim 44 wherein the computer network comprises the Internet.